

<b>Strategy Boards &amp; Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Safer City Partnership Strategy - For Information Board	05/09/2022
<b>Subject: Agenda item 5</b> Administration of Proceeds of Crime Act Funds	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Simon Cribbens, Assistant Director – Commissioning and Partnerships, Department of Community and Children’s Services, City of London Corporation <b>Author:</b> Jack Joslin, Head of the Central Grants Unit	<b>For Information</b>

### **Summary**

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) provides provisions for a portion of the value of seized criminal assets to be redistributed in order to fund community safety and crime reduction initiatives. Applications submitted to access funding have been managed by the Community Safety Manager of the City of London Corporation. To ensure effective due diligence and robust procedures are in place in relation to the awarding and administration of POCA funds, it was agreed in September 2021 that management of this is transferred to the Central Grants Unit. This report provides an update on the process for POCA applications in line with the new Safer City Partnership Strategy

### **Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to:

- Note the update on the implementation of administration processes for the POCA funds

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. The Proceeds of Crime Act (2002) allows for a portion of money made from criminal gains to be redistributed to support community safety and crime reduction initiatives. Applications submitted to access funding have previously been managed by the Community Safety Manager of the City of London Corporation.
2. The Central Grants Unit (CGU) was established in 2016 following recommendations from the Effectiveness of Grant Making Service Based Review. The aim of the review was to increase the strategic impact of grant-making, ensure that grants are managed more efficiently and effectively,

improve the consistency and quality of the customer experience and so bring consequential reputational benefits.

3. The CGU is co-located with the City Bridge Trust team (CBT) in the BHE Institution in order to facilitate consistency of approach and harmonise service standards. The Managing Director of Bridge House Estate, responsible for the grant-making activities of CBT has overview of the CGU, with relevant input from the Charity Finance Team (Chamberlain's Department), with the work being delivered by the Head of Central Grants Unit (HCGU) and the CGU Team.
4. At the meeting of the Partnership in September 2021 it was agreed that the CGU would take on the management and administration of the community focused elements of the POCA Fund from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, given its experience successfully delivering grant programmes across the City of London.

### **Current Position**

5. The CGU has been managing and delivering grant programmes on behalf of the City of London Corporation since 2016 through the Central Grants Programme (CGP), the City Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF) and on behalf of a number of Small Charities where the City of London is Trustee.
6. The CGU has a strong track record of delivering grant programmes in collaboration with Departments and Service Based Committee's. The CGU provides an online application portal, Grant Management Database, comprehensive due diligence and project analysis and full Committee reporting.
7. Once grants are awarded, the CGU manages all grant agreements and ensures projects are monitored and evaluated in line with agreed outcomes.
8. Since April 2022 the CGU has set up assessment processes for the POCA Fund that include robust due diligence that looks at Finance, Governance and Safeguarding. The CGU has been working with the Community Safety Manager to get expert input on this process.
9. An Officer Panel has been adjourned consisting of members of the Safer City Partnership with decision making powers for the POCA Fund, chaired by the Director of the Police Authority. These statutory partners include the NHS, Police Authority, Community Safety, City of London Police, Probation Service and London Fire Brigade.
10. The Panel met in July to discuss the new approach to administering and approving grants.
11. The Panel received a grant application from the Safer Business network. After a rich discussion a grant of £25,000 was approved for preventing and reducing sexual offences and violence against women and girls in the City of London by developing a 'Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement' e-learning tool. Further detail on this project can be found at **Appendix 1**.

## **Next steps**

12. The Partnership intends to develop a funding strategy for its POCA reserves linked to the new Safer City Partnership strategy. This will include how much it intends to allocate to a grant programme for 2022/23. The proposed Funding Criteria is attached at **Appendix 2**.
13. It is noted that the governance process for future allocation of POCA funds is currently being reviewed by the Police Authority Board and the future budget for the Partnership is currently unknown.

## **Strategic Implications**

14. The successful transferral of the administration of POCA funding to the CGU will ensure effective oversight, scrutiny and management of funding awards made, as well as long-term monitoring of initiatives.
15. Effective administration of POCA money will improve the ability to fund initiatives which help to improve community safety and reduce crime.
16. The impact of such initiatives will help to deliver on the SCP's aim of ensuring that the City of London is a safe place for people to live, learn, work and visit.

## **Financial Implications**

17. The cost of grant management and administration is no more than 5 - 10% of the total grant spend of each programme. From analysis of the current POCA Fund criteria it is expected that it would cost around £10,000/ £15,000 annually. All CGU Grant Programmes are recorded on timesheets to ensure accurate recording and re-charging of time. A review of Officer time will be carried out after 12 months, to ensure that the programme is value for money.

## **Conclusion**

18. The Central Grants Unit has established key processes for the successful management of the POCA Fund. This will strengthen scrutiny, governance and long-term monitoring of initiatives to ensure that POCA money is being awarded effectively and utilised in a cost-effective manner to create lasting positive change.

## **Background Papers**

Safe City Partnership Strategy Board – Administration of the Proceeds of Crime Act Funds, dated 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Safer Business Network – Assessment Report

Appendix 2 – POCA Fund Policy 2022

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